



Photo by Capt. Michael Greenberger, 3rd Sig. Bde. PAO

(L-R) 3rd Sig. Bde. Commander Col. Robert Bethea Jr. and Brig. Gen. Ronald Bouchard, deputy commanding general and assistant commandant of the U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon, Ga., are briefed by Lt. Col. Sylvester Cotton, 1st Cav. Div. G-6, on the JNN systems being tested by the 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div.

# Latest Army communications equipment displayed for command

By Capt. Michael Greenberger  
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Brig. Gen. Ronald M. Bouchard, deputy commanding general and assistant commandant of the U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon, Ga., visited Fort Hood last week to observe the latest in U.S. Army communications equipment being tested by Soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

The Joint Network Node, or JNN, equipment has been introduced into military communications networks to allow warfighters greater communications capabilities while meeting the mobile needs of a modular force. The JNN equipment has greatly improved the Army's ability to send data as well as voice over tactical communications networks.

The JNN also allows integration between legacy systems, such as the Mobile Subscriber Equipment the Army has been using for the past 20 years. Satellite communications are key to the success of the JNN's ability to bring communications to units anywhere at anytime.

Bouchard's visit also took

him to the Central Technical Support Facility, where he was given a facility tour by the facility director, Col. Charles McMaster. The CTSF manages programs that test, integrate and certify Army Command Battle systems, like the deployment of JNN to signal units.

Bouchard took time to speak to signal Soldiers about the future of training at the Signal Center.

Bouchard introduced LandWarNet University. LWN-U is a concept educational design to continuously train and educate Soldiers and leaders from the classroom to the battlefield by integrating training from many sources such as institutional sources which include lectures and practical exercises; self-development sources which include on-line classes and simulations; and operational sources, such as field training exercises and deployment training.

At the heart of LWN-U is the integration of all these training sources to enable units to conduct their war-time missions by providing the training when, where, and how the units need it. This affords Soldiers time with their units instead of time spent training at the Signal Center.

A departure from classic Army teaching, "LWN-U seeks to establish an educational system tailored to the individual; a system which is standards-based, not standardized," Bouchard said.

Bouchard went on to say, "Soldiers of today are more technologically advanced than they were 20 years ago. They are digital natives, not digital immigrants."

Pointing toward a cultural shift, technology and the rate of growth of techno-centric individuals has presented the Army with a need to change how it trains its Soldiers and leaders, Bouchard said.

"You've heard of ability group runs; why can't we have ability group classes?" he asked Soldiers of the 3rd Signal Brigade. "If a student shows up for training at the Signal Center, they can 'test out' of certain subjects, allowing them to get more important training with relativity to their current or future positions."

Excited about the future of Signal Corps training, the 3rd Sig. Bde. leaders thanked Bouchard for his visit with a framed letter from 3rd Sig. Bde. Commander Col. Robert L. Bethea Jr.